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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [FR](#) [EU](#) [UN](#) [IZ](#)
SUBJECT: NEW UNAMI SRSG OUTLINES STRATEGY FOR MANDATE,
STAFFING, COMPOUND, AND AIR MOBILITY

Classified By: Pol Counselor Matt Tueller for reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

Priorities

¶1. (C) United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) Special Representative to the Secretary General (SRSG) Staffan De Mistura stated in a November 25 meeting with S/I Satterfield and PolCouns that his top two priorities will be to resolve Article 140 and assist internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees. De Mistura explained that he wants to raise the profile of UNAMI and seize the initiative on high profile issues. "I want to be opportunistic and achieve meaningful results in six months," he said. The other initiatives such as elections and constitutional review are too slow moving to make significant progress in six months, he felt. De Mistura informed us he would leave November 26 to discuss former Deputy SRSG Schulenburg's Article 140 proposals with the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) leadership. "I will meet with the whole leadership except Massoud Barzani, who is out of the country," he said. S/I emphasized that the USG "will support you as vigorously as we can on both policy and resources."

Staffing

¶2. (C) De Mistura announced that he had secured UNHCR's agreement to grow their professional staff resident in Baghdad from one to five, and that two of the additional staff had arrived on that day's November 25 MilAir flight from Amman. Currently, UNAMI has 83 professional staff resident in Baghdad and a total of 363, when you include support and security staff. De Mistura plans a rapid increase of 100 additional professional staff by end of 2008. "I want to focus on the quality, not mere quantity, of the people," he said.

Permanent Compound

¶3. (C) UNAMI does not need a big, expensive compound that "won't be finished until we have all retired." De Mistura feels it is embarrassing to spend \$200 million on a compound, when the money could be better spent on such things as cholera prevention and humanitarian relief. In De Mistura's view, we should wait for the \$190 million proposal for a new compound to flounder in the UN's fifth committee and then replace it with a more modest \$40 million long-term project on the site of the old U.S. embassy. In the meantime, he will expand the existing UNAMI office and residential sites to accommodate the 100 additional professional staff. Responding to De Mistura's inquiry about timing of changes to the size of the International Zone (IZ), S/I said we do not

expect any changes in the IZ at least through 2009.

The EU and French Can Pay for Air Mobility

¶4. (C) De Mistura asserted that a critical requirement for UNAMI is to get their own air mobility in Iraq. They do not want or need a big C-130, like the Danes previously provided. Instead, he said he only needs seven seats and that one of our C-12s would be perfect. De Mistura said that the EU and France had both offered full funding to pay for air mobility and he would like to enter into a reimbursable charter arrangement with MNF-I, for either a dedicated aircraft or as a client with some priority for air mobility requests.

Comment

¶5. (C) De Mistura is bringing welcome fresh energy and focus to the UNAMI mission. Poloffs have noticed that his desire to achieve meaningful results in six months have increased UNAMI staff excitement and sense of purpose. He is a structured thinker who carefully identified his two priority projects.

¶6. S/I did not have an opportunity to clear this cable.
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